



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB148/26

Staff Report

Board meeting May 20 2026

Board Members Please Note: The citations from the District Ordinance, Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards listed below are for your consideration in addition to any other citations you find relevant in considering each application.

052926.41 **Areaway**
616 1st Ave S
DONH-COA-02067
Applicant: Kit Loo, SDOT

Proposed: Repair of areaway including replacement of the glass prism panels

Staff report: A vehicle drove on the sidewalk breaking prism panels and damaging the areaway. This area was rated as Substantially Intact, Notable on the Areaway Survey.

The ARC reviewed the application on May 13. The ARC asked the applicant to bring materials samples or photos of what the color texture and sheen is of the proposed stainless steel substitute for the steel frame of the panels. The applicant explained there were code requirement for loads when there is a total replacement but that it did not specify the material as long as the material could hold the load. Staff will add the brief for using substitute materials to the report. ARC also discussed whether the prisms should be sandblasted or not. Some felt that they panels provided texture to avoid slipping.

The ARC asked for some photos of existing replaced panels. Staff listed a few sites where prism panels have been replaced that Board member might like to visit in person such as:

419 Occidental Ave S
411 1st Ave S

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Smith Tower on Yesler

117 S Main St

117 S Washington (this one is in a metal frame This one might have also been replaced with clear glass)

The application presentation will be updated prior to the May 20 Board meeting.

Draft Motion: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for repair of areaway including replacement of the glass prism panels. (specify the material - Stainless steel or cast iron and if the prisms will be sand blasted or not.)

All per the applicant's submittal.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the May 20, 2026 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

Certificate of approval required. No person shall alter, demolish, construct, reconstruct, restore, remodel, make any visible change to the exterior appearance of any structure, or to the public rights-of-way or other public spaces in a special review district, and no one shall remove or substantially alter any existing sign or erect or place any new sign or change the principal use of any building, or any portion of a building, structure or lot in a special review district, and no permit for such activity shall be issued unless a certificate of approval has been issued by the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

XVIII. AREAWAYS

Areaways are usable areas constructed under the sidewalk between the building foundation and street wall. Areaways were created after the Great Seattle Fire of 1889 when the District was rebuilt and the street elevations were raised. Building standards adopted shortly after the fire required fireproof sidewalk construction to replace the pre-fire wooden sidewalks. Areaways are part of the City's right-of-way area, however, the space is often available for use by the adjacent building owner. (7/03)

The most significant qualities of an areaway are its volume of space, which provides a record of its history, and the architectural features that render its

form, character, and spatial quality. These features include use of unit materials (brick or stone), bays articulated by arches and/or columns, ceiling vaults, and other special features including tilework or skylights (sidewalk prism lenses). The historic characteristics of areaways shall be preserved.
(7/03)

In 2001, the Seattle Department of Transportation completed a survey of approximately 100 areaways in the District. Each areaway was rated in terms of its structural condition and presence of original historic characteristics. A range of structural repairs options were proposed based on the structural and historical ratings. The 2001 Seattle Department of Transportation Areaway Survey shall serve as a guide for the Board's decision making on future alterations or repairs to areaways in the District.
(7/03)

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

[Preservation Briefs 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors](#)

Compelling reasons to use a substitute material instead of the historic material include the unavailability or poor performance of the historic material, or

environmental pressures or code-driven requirements that necessitate a change in material.

Considerations:

Matching the appearance of the historic material

Matching the physical properties of the historic material

Performance of the material over time

Issued: May 13, 2026

Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator